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ABSTRACT

There is a great need for instructional materials which are useful in the professional preparation of teachers, particularly materials to fit a multi-media learning environment. It is helpful to distinguish between such materials and the ways in which they can be used and the various educational purposes thereby served. The procedures or formats used in staff development programs can be called "protocols"--the way things are done, the step-by-step process by which the goals of professional growth programs are accomplished. "Protocol materials" are then defined as audiovisual components of a protocol which are not created within the specific occasion of the protocol. Protocol materials can "hop" from protocol to protocol, e.g., an audiovisual model of a paraprofessional leading a small group discussion may be used in an illustrated lecture or in the more highly structured protocols of model-making or miniteaching. Greater flexibility is thus possible, but no "mix" of protocols and protocol materials is of educational worth until the protocol purposes (e.g., the acquisition of various skills, the development of certain attitudes, etc.) are delineated. Some agency or amalgam of agencies should systematically collect and distribute or create and make available such materials in an "Instructional Performance Library," a national communications network which distinguishes materials, formats, and purposes while monitoring results achieved by using certain purposes. (JS)

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Matter

AN INSTRUCTIONAL PERFORMANCE LIBRARY

by David A. Bickimer, Ph.D.

There is a great need for instructional materials which are useful in the professional preparation of teachers. It seems an opportune time to look to the creation of such materials to fit a multi-media learning environment. It is helpful to distinguish between such materials and the ways in which they can be used and the various educational purposes thereby served. In this way a wide variety of staff development programs become viable.

The words of B.O. Smith and his colleagues in *Teachers for the Real World* are appropriate to set the rationale for the discussion that follows.

> "There is now no set of training situations available to teacher educators. There are lists of objectives, tests for assessing the cognitive achievement and attitudes of trainees, and scales for rating their teaching behavior. There are all kinds of pretentious models for teacher education. But there are no materials to be used in actually training the teacher. As a result, the training of the teacher is carried on intuitively, haphazardly, and with little regard for the spectrum of abilities the trainee should have. . . . There is a great deal of talk about the importance of personality and attitudes in teaching, but there is a complete lack of instructional materials for doing anything about the development of proper attitudes and wholesome self-assessment and control. It is imperative that these materials be prepared at the earliest moment and that those who are involved in teacher education be trained in the use of them." (*Teachers for the Real World,* B. Othaniel Smith, Saul B. Cohen, Arthur Pearl, *et al.*, The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1969).

There is, then, a great need for materials to use in teacher education programs. *A fortori*, there is a great need of instructional materials for in-service staff development programs.

The Twentieth Century Media Guardian

Such materials might well be audio-visual. While there is little convincing evidence that learning audio-visually is more effective than the old read-think-rote route, and while discussions of "audio-visual vs. book" go on tediously and without surcease, still there is reason to opt for audio-visual materials in teacher education.

First of all, quite simply, this is the twentieth century. Twentieth century men are fed information and have their attitudes changed in a multi-media fashion. Thus, our opinions change, our knowledge increases, and our values are jolted and reformed by books, records, television, films, etc. Secondly, a view of the teacher as media-specialist through the centuries holds up surprisingly well. For when *memory* was the chief medium for passing on the culture, the teacher was the guardian of memory. When the pen entered the picture, the teacher became guardian of the pen. When the book came upon the scene, the teacher became guardian of its pages. And now, with still-photography, films, video tapes, etc. stepping front and center with unparalleled rapidity, the teacher might easily step into the role of being their guardian too. Since it seems a useful hypothesis to posit that teachers will teach the way they are taught, if teachers are taught in a multi-media fashion, we can expect them to move more readily into a role as guardian of modern media if they are taught in a multi-media environment.

It is helpful to envision, then, audio-visual materials useful in the professional growth of instructional personnel. In considering such materials, however, it is important to distinguish between the materials the way they are used, and the purpose for which they are intended.

Protocols

By way of definition, the procedures or formats used in staff development programs can be called *protocols*. Borrowed from the language of diplomatic and military etiquette, the word *protocol* in staff development programs comes to mean the way things are done, the step by step process by which the goals of professional growth programs are accomplished. *Protocol materials*, on the other hand, are defined here as audio-visual components of a protocol that are not created within the protocol.

A standard protocol across the nation, for example, is the typical supervisory process in school systems at the heart of which is the relationship between supervisor and teacher. There are steps in this supervisor-teacher protocol. A fairly common step-by-step approach in its most general outline is:

1. supervisor alerts teacher of impending supervision
2. supervisor observes teacher
3. supervisor comments on teacher performance
4. supervisor observes teacher again

Protocols, like the above, can be aligned on a continuum ranging from the relatively unstructured to the relatively structured. Multi-media protocols range from the relatively unstructured illustrated lecture to highly structured micro-mini teaching with stops along the way for such formats as buzz groups, collegial supervision, the standard supervisor teacher relationship, peer teaching, etc.

Protocol Materials

If in the process outlined above, audio-visual materials are used, they are called protocol materials. Thus, if in alerting the teacher (step one) the supervisor sends ahead a video tape of a contingency management technique, that tape constitutes protocol material. For present purposes, however, not all audio-visual materials used in protocols are protocol materials. If, for instance, an audio-visual record is made of a teacher's performance as part of a protocol (e.g. as feedback), this record is not considered as protocol material for it is *created* within the specific occasion of the protocol. This audio-visual record of the teacher's performance might, however, become protocol material if it is used on another occasion. For present purposes, then, protocol materials are defined as audio-visual materials used in protocols, which are not created within the specific occasion of the protocol.

Protocol Purposes

In addition to the distinction between protocols and protocol materials, it is important to distinguish the educational purposes embedded in the protocol situation. Protocols and

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protocol materials are educationally neutral. Even as highly a structured protocol as microteaching is, educationally speaking, rather bland unless it takes its substance from its purpose. Another way of stating the same thing is to note that protocols and protocol materials are not mysterious and magical rites and sacraments. In fact, in their present stage, they are rather simple, obvious means to ends which often times remain obscure.

By way of illustration, the fairly well-known steps in the microteaching protocol are of note:

a. Study technique
b. Practice technique in teaching
c. Critique teaching
d. Restudy technique
e. Reteach
f. g. h. etc. (*simil.*)

This microteaching protocol can have any one of several purposes. Thus, the trainee might be expected to attain a certain performance level of a specific teaching technique; or the trainee might be encouraged to adapt a particular model of a teaching technique to her own style of teaching; or the purpose of the protocol might be simply to sensitize the trainee to the effect a particular technique has on a small group of students. Obviously, the purposes which can be served by the protocol need not be further elaborated. They are legion. The same, however, can be said for protocol materials.

In and of themselves, protocol materials are educationally neutral. A "moving picture" of a teacher in small group work takes on meaning, not primarily from the protocol in which it is embedded but from the protocol's purpose and the purpose for which it is inserted into the protocol. An audio-visual rendering of a paraprofessional leading a small group discussion is, in itself, neither effective nor ineffective, even assuming that it is a rendering of what it purports to be. The protocol material, like the protocol itself, takes on educational substance only in light of its purpose. Like words, protocols and protocol materials derive their meaning from their use to a very significant extent.

The Protocol "Hop"

Staff development programs at the in-service level need to be knowledgeable about protocols, protocol materials, and purposes to be served by these means. Common sense indicates that protocol materials as defined here can "hop" from protocol to protocol. That is only to say, for example, that an audio-visual model of a paraprofessional leading a small group discussion is at home in a relatively unstructured protocol such as an illustrated lecture and is also at home, in a relatively highly structured protocol such as model-making or mini-teaching. It might also stop anywhere along the way between the two extremes of the continuum at such protocols as buzz groups, the standard supervisor-teacher relationship, collegial supervision, etc.

Thus, inserting protocol material into the standard supervisor-teacher relationship, for example, in and of itself does very little. The purpose for the insertion, however, is crucial. An audio-visual model of a small group discussion can be inserted into this protocol to be:

a. emulated by the teacher
b. excelled by the teacher
c. tested by the teacher for its results on students
d. considered by the teacher for acceptance or rejection for her own unique style, etc.

The same model, moreover, can be inserted into the standard microteaching protocol and approximately similar purposes can be served. Similar observation can be made about other protocols like peer teaching, model making, etc.

The Protocol "Mix"

It is clear that the more protocols identified and the more protocol materials available, the greater the flexibility available to teachers in programs designed to allow them to grow professionally. Simple or elaborate as it may be, no "mix" of protocols and protocol materials is of educational worth until the purposes to be served are made clear.

If these distinctions are made among protocols, protocol materials, and the reasons for inserting the protocol materials into the protocols, then a wide variety of professional-growth enhancing experiences become possible. By choosing from a wide variety of protocols, by utilizing selections from a wide variety of protocol materials, and by pinpointing one of a wide variety of reasons for inserting the protocol materials, those responsible for providing conditions under which instructional personnel can better themselves can create flexible, well thought out programs in staff development.

An Instructional Performance Library

Assuming that the purposes to be served can be delineated to a certain extent (e.g. the acquisition of various skills, the development of certain attitudes, *etc.*) and assuming that various protocols are rather easy to come by, the great dearth of multi-media materials, *i.e.* protocol materials, for staff development instruction looms as a great obstacle to improved practice. It may be, however, that such multi-media materials are already in existence. If so, some agency should look to their systematic collection and distribution. Then, too, some agency or amalgam of agencies might well look to the creation of such materials and their systematic availability. Collections of such materials might well spring up across the country. They would constitute what might be called an *Instructional Performance Library*. Care, however, must be taken to distinguish these materials, formats in which they can be used, and the educational purposes served by their use. Such materials would not be fully exploited unless some system were created to monitor the results achieved by using certain *protocol materials* in certain *protocols* for certain *purposes*. An Instructional Performance Library would be, in effect, a national communications network linked with multi-media materials aimed at the continuous professional growth of instructional personnel. It would be self-maintaining and subsequently self-renewing. It would be one way of making *incarnate* the theoretical frameworks applicable to improved instruction.